iAide

Wonder Document

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Introduction

The amount of information in our world today far exceeds any human being's ability of comprehension. While all this information is available at your finger tips through smart phones, it is still difficult to find what you may be looking for. Some applications try to provide the user with contextually relevant info by drawing input from sensors such as GPS (eg. the iPhone apps; Gulesider Live, Trafikanten, TaxiNå).

Our project will investigate where we can draw more input to provide even more contextual information. It is not only interesting for an application to know where a user is (GPS), but also what time of day it is, the weather, what he/she is doing, who the user is accompanied by, and so on. We will examine existing applications which try to provide contextually relevant info; where they draw their input and how well they work.

We will try to create a few prototypes and expose them to user testing, both through quantitative, but mainly through qualitative interviews.

Our target group would be anyone who has a smart phone. There is no point in restricting our group by demographics or by any other aspects. The goal of the project is to lay the foundation for more contextually relevant applications. Instead of users having to adapt to an application, we want applications to adapt to the user.

Background

We will restrict our investigations and prototyping to Apple's iPhone/iPod Touch platform because we currently only have access to those devices. We do not want our imagined application(s) to require in-

development technologies, hence it is appropriate to use existing devices.

Process

First we will scan the Apple AppStore for interesting applications which provide contextual information. From those we will draw inspiration to see what kind of input those applications are using and more importantly, what they are lacking.

From our investigation into existing applications, we will involve users in qualitative interviews to get their opinions and ideas. They will also be asked to imagine themselves in a specific setting, from which we will ask them what kind of information they deem relevant, and how they would search for it. Using this data we will try to find sources of input which can be used to provide this desired information.

We will then develop prototypes which we will user test with the same user group, and evaluate the results. From those results we will revise our prototypes and re-test, and then repeat the process until satisfied.

Goal

Our desired goal of this project is to learn how users manually find the contextually relevant information today, and see how it can be automated in the future. With our results a developer should be able to develop an application which alleviates the user's time and effort in manual searching.